

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-35 are pending in this application. Claims 2-35 are amended. No claims are cancelled.

Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's acknowledgement of the references cited in the Information Disclosure Statement filed April 9, 2004.

SPECIFICATION

In the March 17, 2005 Office Action, the title was objected to as not descriptive. In response to this objection, the title is amended to recite "A Female Connector Assembly with a Displaceable Conductor."

Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the objection to the title be withdrawn.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS

In the March 17, 2005 Office Action, Claims 2-35 were objected to as including minor informalities. In response to this objection, line 1 in each of claims 2-35 is amended to recite "The female" instead of "A female" as suggested by the Examiner in paragraph 2 of the March 17, 2005 Office Action.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the objection to claims 2-35 be withdrawn.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-11, 15, 16, 25, 34, and 35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Grant et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,466,684, herein Grant). The Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for the reasons detailed below.

The claimed invention is directed to a female connector assembly including a base part and a bent resilient conductor. More specifically, claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, “wherein the second portion of the bent resilient conductor is displaceable in a track disposed at a surface of the base part upon receiving the rod-shaped conductor in said conductor channel.” As shown in the non-limiting example of Figure 1, the bent resilient conductor 24 is displaceable within the track 22, thereby allowing movement in the direction of the arrow 26.

As illustrated in Figure 3, Grant is directed to a low insertion force connector with resilient metal conductors in the openings of an insulating connector body.¹ Each conductor has a square opening and has integral leaf springs extending from the respective sides of the square opening towards a terminal entry end of the openings.² The four leaf springs are grouped in two pairs that can engage with the entering terminal either simultaneously or shifted relative to each other.³ The conductors include tabs precisely fitted to be received in grooves of the connector body to orient and fixate the conductors in the openings. More specifically, Grant states “[t]abs 54 provided on the gate part of the conductor are preferably folded into the grooves 14.6 at the sides of the openings on top of the connector body for orienting the conductors in the body openings as will be understood.”⁴ Further, Figures 1 and 3 of Grant illustrate that the tabs 54 fill out the grooves 14.6. Therefore, according to the teachings of Grant, as evidenced by both the disclosure and figures, the tabs 54 must fill out

¹ Grant, Abstract.

² Grant, Column 2, Lines 9-13.

³ Grant, Column 2, Lines 13-19.

⁴ Grant, Column 4, lines 62-66.

the grooves 14.6 to orient and fixate the tabs in place, and therefore the tabs 54 are unable to move laterally in the tracks upon insertion of a male connector.

In light of the above discussion, Applicant respectfully submits that Grant fails to disclose, teach, or suggest a female connector assembly, “wherein the second portion of the bent resilient conductor is displaceable in a track disposed at a surface of the base part upon receiving the rod-shaped conductor in said conductor channel,” as recited in claim 1. Claims 2-11, 15, 16, 25, 34, and 35 depend from claim 1 and therefore include the features of claim 1.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 1-11, 15, 16, 25, 34, and 35 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) be withdrawn.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 12-14, 17-24, and 26-33 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Grant. The Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for the reasons detailed below.

Paragraph 6 of the March 17, 2005 Office Action recites, *inter alia*, the following.

Grant shows all the features of these claims except a recess in the channels, a flexible ceiling membrane, a specific volume (size) of the connector and materials of the resilient conductor and the base part. Official notice is given these features are well-known in the art of electrical connectors and widely used. It would have been obvious to provide these features for their intended purposes because these would involve only routine skill in the art.

Claims 12-14, 17-24, and 26-33 depend from claim 1 and therefore include the features of claim 1. As discussed in detail above, with respect to the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection to claim 1, Grant fails to disclose, teach, or suggest the female connector assembly recited in claim 1, “wherein the second portion of the bent resilient conductor is displaceable

in a track disposed as a surface of the base part upon receiving the rod-shaped conductor in said conductor channel.”

Therefore, the Applicant respectfully rebuts the Examiner’s allegation that Grant shows all of the features of the claimed invention except a recess in the channels, a flexible ceiling membrane, a specific volume (size) of the connector and materials of the resilient conductor and the base part.⁵

Further, Applicant respectfully submits that the specific features recited in dependent claims 12-14, 17-24, and 26-33 are not “well-known” in the arts, and that the Examiner’s conclusory statements block-quoted above do not provide the necessary evidence to support a 35 U.S.C. § 103 obviousness rejection.

MPEP § 2144.03(A) states “it is never appropriate to rely solely on ‘common knowledge’ in the art without evidentiary support in the record, as the principle evidence upon which a rejection was based.” *Zurko*, 258 F.3d 1379, 1385, 59 U.S.P.Q.2d 1693, 1697 (Fed. Cir. 2001). (“The Board cannot simply reach conclusions based on its own understanding or experience--or on its assessment of what would be basic knowledge or common sense. Rather, the board must point to some concrete evidence in the record in support of these findings.”). Further, MPEP § 2144.03(B) states “[o]rdinarily there must be some form of evidence in the record to support an assertion of common knowledge.” *Zurko*, 258 F.3d at 1386, 59 U.S.P.Q.2d at 1697 (holding that general conclusions concerning what is “basic knowledge” or “common sense” to one of ordinary skill in the arts without specific factual findings and some concrete evidence in the record to support these findings will not support an obviousness rejection).

⁵ Office Action mailed March 17, 2005, paragraph 6.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that if this rejection is maintained that some concrete evidence in the record be provided in support the above block-quoted conclusory statements.

In light of the above discussion, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 12-14, 17-24, and 26-33 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, in view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the objections and rejections and allowance of each of claims 1-35 in connection with the present application is earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact John A. Castellano at the telephone number of the undersigned below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

HARNESS, DICKEY, & PIERCE, P.L.C.

By


John A. Castellano, Reg. No. 35,094

P.O. Box 8910
Reston, Virginia 20195
(703) 668-8000


John A. Castellano, Reg. No. 35,094

JAC/SAE/pjd